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For A/LM DAS Moser from Ambassador Kenney

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: AMGT APER RP

SUBJECT: 2007 GSO of the Year Award Nomination

REF: State 24881

¶1. Summary. I am proud to nominate the entire General Services Section of Mission Manila for the honor of the 2007 GSO of the Year Award. They have reached remarkably high levels of achievement and customer satisfaction in a year marked by typhoons, budget reductions, and an OIG inspection. End Summary

¶2. Working through typhoons, designing process improvements, using the internet to promote open competition, adopting Department initiatives, saving money, and empowering its locally-employed staff, GSO Manila is on a quest to excel by improving customer service and changing the way they do business.

¶3. The GSO team vividly demonstrated its commitment to customers and the U.S. Mission in the Philippines on Thursday, September 28, 2006 when a major typhoon hit Manila at 11 0'clock in the morning. Although the typhoon closed the Embassy, most GSO employees reported to work. The Contracting and Procurement Unit put aside their own family and personal concerns to ensure that all end of fiscal year actions were completed, working 24 hours straight as the typhoon swirled outside. The warehouse and motor pool teams arrived to secure facilities and, when safe, run messages of assistance to families in need despite downed power lines, blocked streets, and winds upward to 100 miles per hour. The maintenance team worked through driving rain and high winds, putting their own safety aside during the height of the storm to cut down branches and secure equipment that had fallen on Mission grounds and which could have been turned into life-threatening flying objects. In the aftermath of the storm, GSO provided temporary lodging as well as laundry and refrigerator/freezer stations for Mission families who were without electricity for almost one week; while LES received excess building materials to repair their damaged homes, potable water; and access to our laundry and refrigeration banks.

¶4. Forever working to improve, Manila's Property and Supply Unit (P&S) applied process mapping to streamline most of its processes. Working with finance and procurement colleagues, senior LES in P&S re-engineered Post's outsourced warehouse delivery service request process by applying bulk funding to contract instruments and reducing order-driven paperwork by a staggering 60% and employee overtime by 10 hours per pay period. The same formula was used to improve the process for receiving maintenance and vehicle repair parts.

¶5. The Contracting and Procurement unit (C&P) designed and implemented an external website to allow contractors to register their services, access solicitations, and submit bids. The expected results include savings of 4000 man hours, \$6,000 in advertisement costs, and huge reductions in photocopying and paper needs.

¶6. Supporting Department management improvement initiatives, Manila is also a leader in competitive sourcing, with over 100 full-time positions occupied by contract workers, and C&P is working on a full competitive sourcing analysis of eight additional cost centers. As Post prepares for new construction and the co-location of USAID service providers on Embassy grounds, GSO is already planning with USAID on how best to share motor pool and warehouse services.

¶ 7. Additionally, as part of Manila's effort to enhance its new Professional Development Center to facilitate training at Post and in the region, GSO's Visitors Section has negotiated a 37% reduction in hotel rates for FSI-sponsored and other training hosted in Manila.

¶ 8. The most impressive feature of GSO's strong performance is that it is planned and implemented by LES. It was local staff who made the ministry contacts and negotiated a significant reduction for the in-processing time for military personnel shipments. Throughout GSO, LES have embraced the opportunity to improve their jobs and their service. At a recent presentation to the entire Management Section staff, over 10 LES made presentations on work improvement initiatives while the annual C&P Customer Outreach Workshop included presentations by every member of the unit.

¶ 9. I recognize that a nomination for an entire GSO is unique. Yet, it makes sense. Manila GSO is a team and each GSO initiative has been accomplished with the support of colleagues while generating critical financial savings and other economies. GSO Manila represents the work of over 300 people including full-time contractors. Together, they have established the General Services Office's reputation as a leader in process improvement and customer service.

Kenney